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ABSTRACT

Effective leadership is critical to the successful development of continuing education programs. Thus, combining the results of research on leadership and program development holds promising implications for improving the process of developing continuing education programs. Most research on leadership can be classified as following the power-influence, trait, behavior, or situational approach. Studies using each of the four methodologies are consistent in their finding that leaders (1) have a vision or an intention as to where the organization is headed and how it will get there, (2) communicate their intentions, (3) give themselves to accomplishing their intentions, and (4) motivate others to do the same. The continuing education leader's approach to his or her role will influence the program development process and thus will ultimately affect the end result of the program. For this reason, leaders of continuing education program development should possess and use the human, technical, and conceptual skills necessary to accomplish program goals and to empower their fellow planners, instructors, evaluators, and other colleagues to participate in the program planning and development process. (MN)

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LEADERSHIP AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

By

Gary G. Meister, Ed.D. and Nancy A. Evers, Ph.D.

It has been shown that leadership is an integral part of continuing education program development. Effective leadership is critical to the successful development of continuing education programs. Research on program development and leadership hold implications for how to improve continuing education program development efforts. It could therefore be assumed that there is usefulness in study of the combined implications of program development research and leadership research. This paper presents a discussion of the implications of the combined results of program development and leadership research. Presented first is an overview of program development leadership research. A discussion of their combined implications follows the overviews.

Program Development

Tyler (1949), Knowles (1980), Boyle (1981), Houle (1978) and others have presented models for continuing education development that include steps or phases of activities. The concept that continuing education and training program development is a process of phases or categories of activities is supported by a small amount of research evidence. Boyle (1965), Pennington and Green (1976), and Meister (1984) each conducted field studies of continuing education program development and found a development process of interrelated activities.

A research project initiated in 1961 through the University of Wisconsin Extension Service studied the process of county extension program planning (Boyle, 1965). The major emphases of the study "was to identify those factors in the planning process which contribute most to the development of an effective projected plan for an education program" (p. 10). Boyle's study found that phases do exist in a program development process. Boyle reported finding five phases in the program planning process: "the formation of a broad organizational philosophy, objectives, policies, and procedures for program planning in the state; the identification and clarification of a need and preparation for planning county programs; the organization and maintenance of a county planning group; the reaching of decisions on the problems, concerns, and opportunities; the preparation of a written program document" (pp. 7-9). The project focused on County Extension Service program planning processes in two Wisconsin counties. Ethnographic study methods were used including personal observations, surveys and interviews of staff and extension service members. Boyle's study found that: a) phases do exist in a program planning (development) process; and b) the phases are not aligned with established popular frameworks.

Pennington and Green (1976) studied program planning processes of six continuing professional education programs in five universities. Reported results of the study indicate "that the planning process comprised a series of tasks and decisions

that seemed to cluster around six groups of activities" (p. 17). Clusters were specific, related groups of activities. These clusters and their relationship to each other were developed into a theoretical model of program planning (p. 17). The clusters were: a) Originating the Idea, b) Developing the Idea, c) Making a Commitment, d) Developing the Program, e) Teaching the Course, and f) Evaluating the Impact. The study provides additional indication that in continuing education projects, steps and phases of a program development process do exist.

Meister (1984) utilized field study methodologies for an in-depth analysis of the program development processes and related aspects in how a business developed continuing education programs. The selected study site was the American Telegraph and Telephone (AT&T) Communication Company's Sales and Marketing Education Center. The study indicated that a program development process occurred in six interrelated phases: a) Initiation of Development Projects, b) Project Planning, c) Course Materials Development, d) Pilot, e) Transfer to Delivery, and f) Evaluation. Further, the phases of development activities were influenced by numerous factors which shape the actual development process. The major influencing factor on the shaping of the actual program development process was the in-house prescriptive program development model which was supported by site administration. Other major factors influencing the actual development process included organizational and operational structure, rapid change, the amount of allocated time to the

project, interpersonal relationships, and philosophy of adult and continuing education. Influencing factors were interrelated and often inseparable.

Boyle (1965), Pennington and Green (1976), and Meister (1984) provided insights of program development from three different continuing education environments. In each study, phases or clusters of activities were identified in the program development process. Continuing education program development is a process phenomenon which occurs in identifiable phases.

Leadership

Leadership has been studied in different ways, depending upon the researcher's concept of leadership and preferences for certain research methodologies. Most research on leadership can be classified into the following four approaches: 1) power-influence approach, 2) trait approach, 3) behavior approach, and 4) situational approach. In spite of the disparity of approaches, the proliferation of terms, and the tendency of researchers to focus on a narrow aspect of leadership, progress has been made in developing an understanding of leadership and identifying the determinants of leadership effectiveness. Understanding of leadership can be derived from identifying points of convergence in results from different research approaches. Some of the points of convergence will be presented after a brief review of each approach to the study of leadership.

Power-Influence Approach

Research associated with the power-influence approach to the study of leadership has examined the reciprocal influence processes between leader and follower. Based on this approach, leader effectiveness is explained in terms of the source and amount of power available to leaders and the manner in which leaders exercise power over followers. Power is defined as a person's potential to influence the attitudes and/or behaviors of others in the direction desired by the person (Yukl, 1981). Influence may be derived from two sources, the position or the person. The potential influence derived from the nature of an administrative position and the authority vested in its occupant is named "position power". The potential influence derived from characteristics of the person occupying the administrative position is named "personal power".

Research on the use of different forms of power suggests that effective leaders rely more on personal power derived from their expertise and attractiveness than on position power. However, position power, especially the authority to make necessary changes and dispense tangible rewards, is also important. The amount of position power necessary for leader effectiveness depends on the nature of the organization, task, and subordinates (Yukl, 1981).

There appears to be two fundamentally different orientations to the use of power in organizations (McClelland, 1970). One orientation seeks to dominate subordinates by keeping them weak and dependent on the leader; the second orientation seeks to free subordinates or empower subordinates by recognizing and building subordinate skills to the organization and its members (Bennis, 1985; Kanter, 1983). Research on the manner in which power is used suggests that effective leaders exert their influence in a subtle, careful fashion that minimizes status differentials and enhances the self-esteem of subordinates (Yukl, 1981).

Trait Approach

Research associated with the trait approach to the study of leadership has focused on identifying traits relevant for leadership effectiveness or identifying traits that appear to contribute to a person's ability to perform well in an administrative position. An assumption underlying this approach is that some people are "natural leaders" endowed with certain traits not possessed by others. It should be noted that a limited number of studies associated with this approach have examined the relationship between traits and behaviors.

Recent investigations of leader traits suggest that managerial motivation and managerial skills are predictors of leadership effectiveness (Miner, 1965, 1978; McClelland, 1975). Effective administrators in large, heirarchial organizations tend to have a high need for power, a high need for achievement, and

a low need for affiliation (McClellan and Burnham, 1976). Further, most effective leaders have a socialized power orientation and are more interested in building up the organization than in personal aggrandizement or domination of others (McClelland, 1975). Successful leaders typically have a strong desire for their group to achieve challenging goals. Successful managers are likely to have values and interests consistent with the requirements of the job. Technical skills, conceptual skills, and human relations skills are necessary for most leadership positions, but the relative importance of the skills and the optimal mix of specific skills depends on the situation (Katz, 1955; Mann, 1965).

Behavior Approach

Research associated with the behavior approach to the study of leadership has identified behaviors or activities which leaders perform and identified behaviors associated with effective leaders. Mintzberg (1973) proposed a typology of managerial activities which were grouped into three general categories: interpersonal behavior, information processing, and decision making. Studies conducted by Stogdill, et al (1962), Comrey et al (1954), Halpin and Winer (1957), Fleishman (1953), Bowers and Seashore (1966), House and Dessler (1974), Bass and Valenzi (1974) identified leader behaviors. Due to different leadership conceptualizations and measurements, there is no widely accepted typology of specific behaviors; however, most researchers acknowledge that task-oriented behavior, group-

maintenance behavior, external-representation behavior, and motivating subordinate behaviors are generally relevant aspects of leadership behavior.

Effective leaders perform task-related behaviors which are essential in their particular situation; the behaviors may include planning, organizing, coordinating, setting goals, clarifying subordinate roles, providing skill training, disseminating information, solving technical problems and facilitating work by obtaining necessary supplies and resources. Effective leaders perform group-maintenance behaviors of establishing and maintaining favorable relationships with subordinates by acting supportive and considerate; effective leaders also try to maintain group cohesiveness and cooperation at a level appropriate for the situation by engaging in conflict management and team building behaviors. Effective leaders perform external-representation behaviors of establishing mutually beneficial relationships with peers, superordinates, and people outside of the organization by acting as a spokesperson for the group, negotiating on behalf of the group, lobbying for resources, soliciting support and cooperation from other groups, maintaining contacts with information sources, and forming alliances with influential people to promote and defend the group. Effective leaders motivate subordinates by providing praise, recognition, and tangible rewards to subordinates demonstrating outstanding performance; they also are likely to use participative decision-making and delegation when appropriate to elicit subordinate commitment and involvement (Yukl, 1981).

Situational Approach

Research associated with the situational approach to the study of leadership has identified aspects of the situation which influence the leader's behavior and determine its effectiveness. Situational or contingency theories have been developed to explain leadership effectiveness. Each of these theories assumes that there are aspects of a situation which enhance or limit the influence of the leader's behavior. Contingency theories of leadership attempt to explain the moderating influence of situational variables on the relationship between leader behavior and end results. In general, contingency theories of leadership emphasize flexible or adaptive leadership that is resonsive to changing conditions.

Fiedler's Contingency Model of Leadership Effectiveness (1964, 1967) deals with the moderating influence of three situational variables (leader-member relations, position power, task structure) on the rationship between a leader trait (least preferred coworker or LPC) and subordinate performance. According to the model, leaders with high LPC scores are more effective in moderately favorable situations, and leaders with low LPC scores are more effective in situations which are very favorable or very unfavorable.

Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory (1972, 1977) explains how the effectivenss of task-oriented and relationship-oriented leader behavior is contingent on the

maturity of the subordinate. Depending on a subordinate's confidence and skill in relation to the task to be performed, different combinations of task-oriented and relationship-oriented leader behaviors should be used.

House's Path-Goal Theory of Effective Leadership (1971) deals with the leader's influence on subordinate satisfaction and motivation. The nature of task, work, environment, and subordinate characteristics determine what type of leader behavior (instrumental, supportive, or participative) is necessary to have satisfied and motivated subordinates in a given situation. According to this theory, instrumental leadership will increase subordinate effort and satisfaction when there is role ambiguity but not when there is role clarity; supportive leadership will increase subordinate effort when subordinates have a task that is adversive; participative leadership will increase subordinate effort in the situation where subordinates have an unstructured task. The primary function of the leader according to this theory is to promote goal identity and make the path to the goal clear or free of obstacles for the subordinate.

Points of Convergence in Leadership Research

Studies on leadership power, traits, behaviors, and situational variables have generated a number of findings. Some of the findings from different research approaches are consistent and appear to converge on points which provide general understanding of leadership. Points of convergence in the

research on leadership are: leaders have a vision or an intention of where the organization is headed and how it will get there; leaders communicate intentions; leaders position the organization to accomplish the intentions; leaders give themselves to accomplishing the intentions; leaders motivate others to give of themselves to the intentions by empowering others.

Leaders have a vision or an intention of where the organization is headed and how it will get there. Many definitions of leadership indicate that leadership is an interactive process to influence a group toward achieving goals. In fact, the most commonly used measure of leadership effectiveness is the extent to which the leader's group attains its goals. House's Path Goal Theory of Effective Leadership suggests that it is a primary function of the leader to get group members to clearly understand and value the goals to be accomplished and to clearly understand and value the path to accomplishing the goals. In order to assist others with goal and path clarity, the leader needs to possess a clear vision or intention for where the group or organization is headed and how it will get there.

Leaders communicate intentions. Effective leaders translate their intentions into reality through effective communication with others. Leaders articulate and define shared meanings or

intentions; then they invent ways to communicate them. Effective leaders have used images, metaphors, and models as ways to communicate intentions (Bennis and Nanus, 1985). Images, metaphors, and models make intentions of where the group is going and how it will get there very clear to all of the members of the group or organization.

Leaders position the organization to accomplish the intentions. Effective leaders align the members of the group or units of the organization in a manner or structure which will facilitate accomplishing the intentions. Leaders relate with others in the organization who hold subordinate, superordinate, and coordinate positions. Effective leaders usually have a relationship of trust with those others. Trust is established by the leader being clear about group intentions and behaving in a manner consistent with those intentions. Effective leaders understand and shape their organizations; they know the talents of the people and bring them together to focus on accomplishing the intentions.

Leaders give themselves to accomplishing the intentions. Effective leaders recognize their strengths, compensate for weaknesses, discern the fit between their perceived skills and the job requirements, and apply their talents to accomplishing the goals or intentions. Effective leaders have self-confidence. They know and respect themselves. They have or acquire the human, technical, and conceptual skills necessary to get the job done. They have an expertise which they can use. They know they

have a wider repertoire of leader behaviors which they can give to accomplish the intentions and they can display the appropriate behavior required by the situation to accomplish the intention.

Leaders motivate others to give of themselves to the intentions by empowering others. Effective leaders recognize and respect the talents of others, identify how the talents of others can contribute to accomplishing intentions, and free others to give their talents to accomplishing the intentions. The enlightened leader delegates, shares information openly, and encourages participation of others in decision-making. The leader empowers others by building the skills of self-confidence of others and sharing the accomplishment of the intentions with them. The leader motivates by talent identification rather than talent reward. Effective leaders pull the collective talents of individuals together to accomplish intentions they all value and enjoy working toward together.

Implications

A continuing education leader is in a leadership role with planners, instructors, evaluators, and other personnel who support continuing education. The leader's approach to this role will influence the program development process. The leader's influence will ultimately affect the end result of the program. Findings of program development research and findings of leadership research hold implications for leading continuing education program development and for preparing continuing education program leaders.

Leaders of continuing education program development should have a vision or intention of what the continuing education program can accomplish and how the group working on program development can accomplish those intentions. The leader should have a clear vision of the goals and the path or process which the group will follow in accomplishing the goals.

Leaders of continuing education program development should communicate their intentions. They should articulate the philosophy of adult education, define the goals of the continuing education program, and outline the process which will be followed in the program development process. Models have been demonstrated to be effective means of communicating the program development process. A major factor influencing the success of program development is the use of a predefined development model which is endorsed by the organization's leadership. The existence of a development model and the expectation by leadership that it should be the process by which programs are developed translates intentions into the actual development process. The development model provides the basis for a commonly understood direction underwhich individuals proceed when performing development work. The model also provides the source for common terminology.

Leaders of continuing education program development should understand the talents of the people who work on program development and bring the talents of everyone together, focusing

them upon accomplishing the goals of the program development effort. The involvement of stakeholders in the development process as part of a development team provides a means for those persons who either have a direct interest in the outcome of the development work or are critical to program development in some way to engage in dialogue regarding their individual expectations, plans, and problems. This exchange provides mutual awareness and understanding of how each person is contributing to the common goals. Lines of authority, levels of organizational position, and the relationship of roles and functions to positions affects the development process. The roles of positions, the necessary interactions between positions, and the clarity of relationships between positions and the overall picture of how it works needs to be commonly understood by all of those working on the program development.

Leaders of continuing education program development should possess and use the human, technical, and conceptual skills necessary to accomplish the program goals. They should have expertise or specialized knowledge and skill in continuing education program development; they should know the critical components of program development, including philosophy, goals and objectives, instructional activities, instructional resources, assessment, and evaluation. They should also know the factors influencing the development process. The potential may then exist to minimize or maximize the influence of factors on the development process. The leaders should demonstrate a high

level of interpersonal competence. They should have a wide range of leader behaviors and be able to demonstrate them appropriately in the particular situation.

The leaders of continuing education program development should empower others in the organization to accomplish the program goals. They should recognize the talents of each person working on program development and free them to give those talents to accomplishing program development goals. Program development leaders should build commitment to the organization accomplishing its goals rather than to the leader. They should delegate, share information openly, and encourage participation in decision making.

Colleges and universities should examine their curricula to ensure skill development in areas of practical use in the field for preparing adult and continuing education leaders. Preparation of continuing education program development leaders should include program development models, teaching and learning styles, theory of adult learning, communication theory and practice, management, instructional theory, curriculum, continuing education philosophy, leadership theory and specific skills in interpersonal relationship developments. Preparation programs should maintain a constant dialogue with organizations and businesses in the field to identify current and emerging knowledge and skills for continuing education program leaders.

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